1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

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Plate XVII. Roadside grazing of goats.

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Plate XVIII. A farming family.

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

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Plate XIX. Tillage - traditional style.

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Plate XX. Tillage - new style.

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

for the evening meal, Rosary, and sleep. Electricity has made his time-table only slightly less dependent on the times of the rising and setting sun.

Increased spending-power, a more varied diet now including a variety of preserved and non-local foods, and the replacement of home-produced cotton by purchased materials for making clothes, have all contributed to the extension of shopping facilities in the villages. Apart from the 'general store', specialised shops have also made their appearance - butchers, pharmacists, clothing shops, and so on. The 1939-45 war brought flour and bread rationing and the end of home-baking - hence a further village specialisation (see p. 182). Since the War, the number of vans touring the countryside every week has increased rapidly to bring a variety of wares to the door of even the most lonely farmhouse. The *petrolin* van was early in the field, for the rural Maltese have long relied on paraffin for both cooking and such heating as the houses receive. Yet another addition in recent years to the diet of the poorer classes has been the free distributions of food (cheese, rice, corn-meal and flour) made by C.A.R.E. and by Catholic Relief Services (cheese, beans, flour, etc.), another organisation distributing surplus United States food supplies abroad.

Village housing is changing more slowly. The traditional Maltese rural home was a flat-roofed dwelling built round an enclosed courtyard, from which a staircase frequently led to an upper floor. The courtyard was the centre of domestic life and much of the regular work of the household was done here. A door, large enough to take a cart, opened on to the street. Windows on outside walls were small and rare. In many of the older parts of the villages, accommodation for animals and stores adjoins the rooms occupied by the family, the whole forming a compact economic and domestic unit. Water was carried from a village pump and sanitation, if any, was limited to independent cesa-pits requiring periodic emptying. In winter such premises were liable to be very cold; in the heat of summer the rough roads of beaten earth readily produced a fine dust which can only have had harmful effects on the widespread trachoma and similar ailments.

Nowadays much of this survives only in the memory of the older people. Only some village streets in Gozo are not now surfaced; mains sewerage has been extended to all the larger villages of Malta; electricity is absent only in north-western Gozo; familiar red telephone kiosks have appeared all over the Islands; the larger villages in Malta have cinemas, in addition to much older Band Club buildings.

The essential features of the village society within which the Maltese farmer lives today may be summarised thus in conclusion:-

Economically, there has been a change from the independent, subsistent family unit to a diversified and inter-dependent occupational structure in the village, along with a realisation of the impossibility of maintaining Maltese agriculture in its traditional form without 'artificial' support. Materially, the village is seen to have benefited from a wide range of developments which have improved it as a place in which to live for the Maltese countryman with his now greater range of demands - and the buying-power with which to achieve them, thanks to war-time siege and subsequently to Government subsidy and guarantee. Socially, literacy and the awareness of a different way of life beyond the village have brought to the younger generation an intense dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction not only with the social regime of the village, even in its present broadened and functionally diversified form, but also with the farming on which the community has depended.

Thus farming in its present form is waning and the Maltese farmer as he was in the recent past - and still is among the older generation - is a disappearing individual. If the clash between the present younger generation and the old order can be resolved and if the retreat from the land can be stemmed at all, a different kind of agriculture will emerge with a new type of farmer and a changed rural society.

REFERENCES

1. Census of the Maltese Islands 1948. Table 53.
2. C.A.R.E. - Co-operative for American Remittances to Everywhere.

Note: For a fuller consideration see R. W. Boxley: 'The Individual and Changing Rural Society in Malta', Ph.D. Thesis, Durham, 1956.

600 authorities each year.

*159 494 234 434 [432] Gaetu has been a member of the Malta Milk Company since its foundation in 1949 and appears to attribute some of the present benefits enjoyed by the milk producer to the work of the Company on behalf of the member herdsmen. In January, 1958, he was selling some 3½ gallons of cows' milk and 5 gallons goats' milk to the M.M.U. but was also selling some privately each day, notably 12/- or 13/- worth to a nunnery "where my grandfather used to sell milk before me". Both his grandfather and father were herdsmen with goats but it was not until after the 1939-45 War that Gaetu went in [454] for cows. He acknowledges saving some £1200 as a result of the War and says that most of this money went on the establishment of his herd of cows, together with improvements to the accommodation for the animals.

*159 423 234 [429] Gaetu owns the house, which is several centuries old, and the farm buildings and rents the adjacent exercise yards from the Government. He has been keen to develop his own property since the war in order to qualify for the necessary permit from the sanitary authorities to keep his now greater number of animals. The Plan given in the Summary of this Case shows how the activity of both family and farm is concentrated in a small and compact cluster of buildings and rooms within the built-up area of the village. This is typical of the majority of farm units based on livestock in the Islands (v.Cases I & IV) but contrasts with some (v.Case II) in which the animals have to be housed at some distance from the family living quarters, a much less satisfactory position for the herdsmen concerned.

*159 342 ●351 423 The focus of domestic activity in Gaetu's household is the tiny yard, some fifteen feet square. Doorways lead off to the ground floor living rooms, to the goat shed and cattle byres and, through a large passage-cum-storage room, to the narrow alley way which links the house to the street. From the yard steps lead down to a cellar used for fodder storage and another flight leads up to the first-floor store-rooms above the kitchen and living room. A further staircase from inside the entrance room gives access to the first-floor extra bedroom. Gaetu's premises are typical with their intensive use of available space and maximum building development on the portion owned by the farmer himself but atypical in that he has been fortunate enough to acquire the adjacent exercise ground and small patch of cultivable soil with a reasonable prospect of continued rented tenure (v.Map 8).

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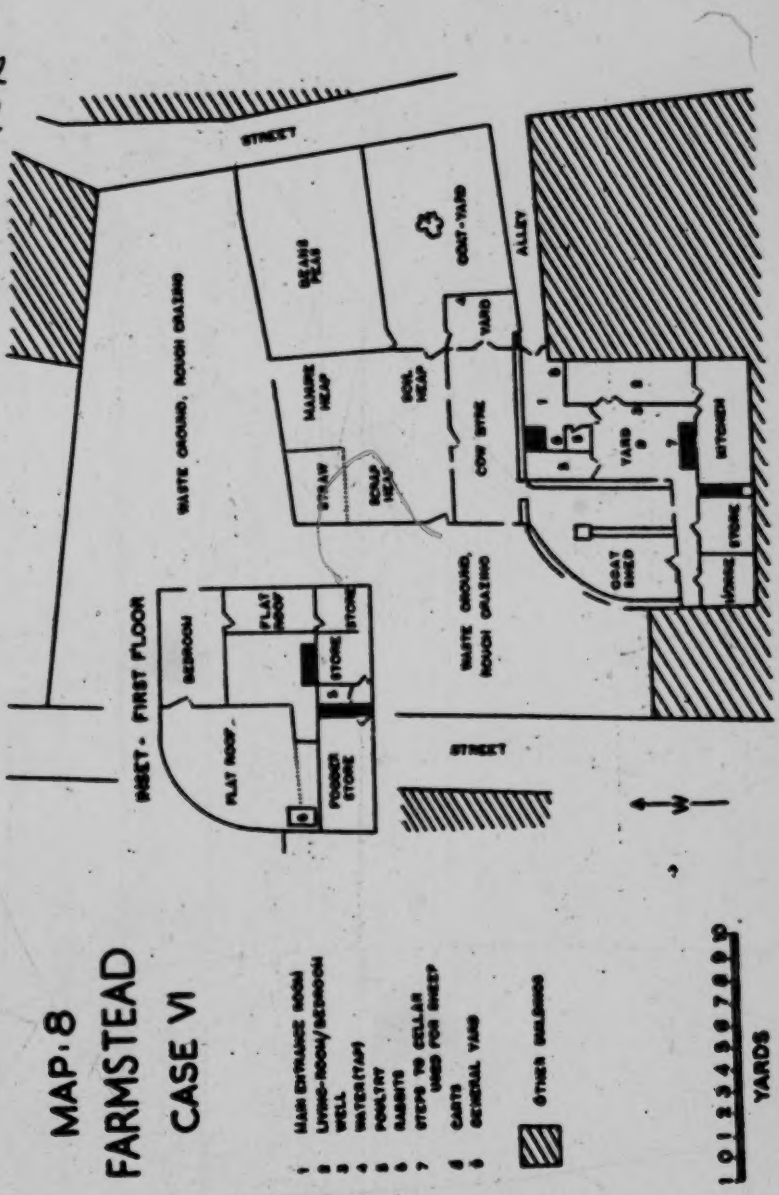

[following p. 102]

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

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IN THE GARDEN OF CASA LEONI (DAR IL-LYUNI)
[See pp. 191–193.]

GRILLE OF WELL IN THE PALACE, VALETTA
[See p. 181.]

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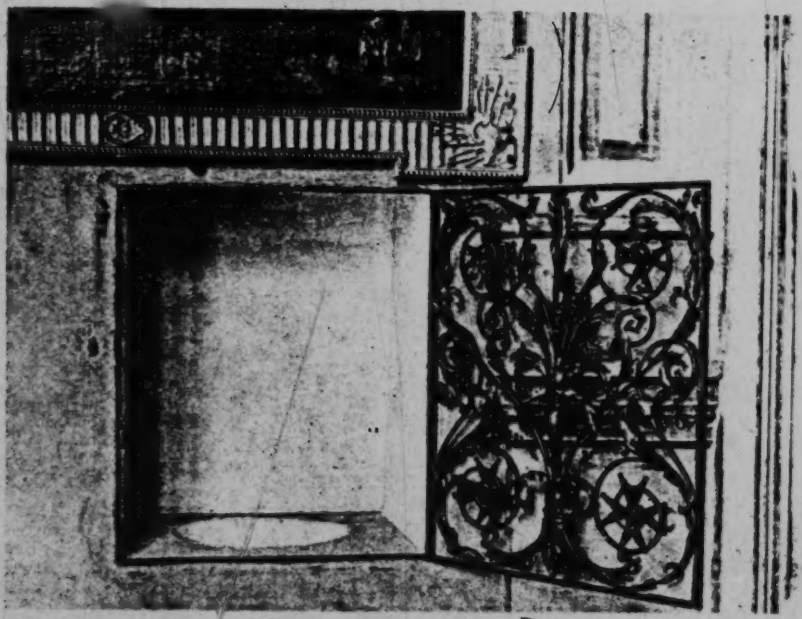

[facing P. 161]
[pp. 161-192 Not processed]

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

some sculptured escutcheon; the old stone *fougasses*[1] to be encountered along the coast; even the very cliffs; even tiny Comino, from whose stony fields, where is cultivated the cumin seed from which the island takes its name, there rises one of the massive square keeps which the Knights scattered throughout their territory.[2]

The casals are, as has been said in an earlier chapter, not villages, but compact stone townships of tall houses and narrow streets, solidly built in good substantial Baroque architecture. Their outskirts, as likely as not, are dignified with some ancient country-house concealed behind high walls amid charming gardens—the beauty and seclusion of the Maltese gardens are justly proverbial—while the focus of the casal, both literally and metaphorically, is the parish church. This is generally a great Baroque pile of golden sandstone flanked by two massive towers, but an exception is the Parish Church of Mosta, built in the classical style in the middle of the nineteenth century mainly by the efforts, both technical and financial, of the villagers themselves to the design of the ingenious Maltese architect Grognet de Vassé mentioned in Chapter II. It is topped by a dome that claims to be the third largest in the world, being surpassed in size only by those of S. Sophia in Constantinople and S. Peter's in Rome, higher internally than the dome of the Roman Pantheon and exceeding by sixteen feet the diameter of that of S. Paul's in London.

[1] Patrick Brydone (*cf.* pp. 143–147) gives an interesting account of this little-known form of coastal defence; "For we found, to our no small amazement, that the rocks were not only cut into fortifications but likewise into artillery to defend these fortifications: being hollowed out in many places into the form of immense mortars. The charge is said to be about a barrel of gunpowder, over which they place a large piece of wood, made exactly to fit the mouth of the chamber. On this they heap a great quantity of cannon balls, shells, or other deadly materials; and when an enemy's ship approaches the harbour, they fire the whole into the air: and they pretend it produces a very great effect, making a shower for two or three hundred yards round that would sink any vessel."

[2] An excellent companion for the exploration of the island is F. Weston's *Walks in Malta*, published in Valetta. Later booklets include Showell Styles, *Walks and Climbs in Malta* (Valetta, and edn., 1952), and H. H. Hick, *Walks in Gozo* (Malta, 1953).